



PRESS RELEASE

House Armed Services Committee

Floyd D. Spence, Chairman

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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PRESS ADVISORY

HOUSE ARMED SERVICES SUBCOMMITTEE TO CONDUCT FIELD HEARING AT GRISSOM AIR FORCE BASE, INDIANA

The Subcommittee on Military Personnel of the Committee on Armed Services of the U.S. House of Representatives will conduct a field hearing on the quality and effectiveness of the military health care system for retired beneficiaries. The hearing will take place on Friday, February 25 at 11 a.m. in the Consolidated Club at Grissom Air Force Base, Indiana.

Media Information:

- All members of the press interested in covering the hearing should contact the Grissom Air Force Base Public Affairs Office at 765-688-3348.
- On the day of the hearing, press should arrive at the Consolidated Club no later than 10:30 a.m.
- **Directions:** The Grissom Air Force Base Consolidated Club is open to the public and is located at 325 Liberator Street in the Grissom Aeroplex off U.S. Highway 31 in Indiana.
- In compliance with Department of Defense election-year policies, the subcommittee will be unable to address questions from the media at the Consolidated Club. Subcommittee members *will* hold a press availability immediately following the hearing at a nearby location to be announced.

Public Information:

- The hearing is open to the public.

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Witness List:

Panel 1: Retired Military Personnel

Col. Joseph Ryan, USA (Ret.)

Senior Master Sgt. David Curl, USAF (Ret.)

Master Sgt. Ted Huff, USAF (Ret.)

Maj. Ross Morkal, USAF (Ret.)

Active Guard and Reserve Personnel (To be Determined)

Panel 2: Local Health Care Provider Representatives

To be determined

Panel 3: TRICARE Representatives

Brig. Gen. Joseph E. Kelley, USAF - Lead Agent Region 5, TRICARE

Mr. Raymond L. Mouse - Regional Vice President, Anthem Alliance

Background Information:

The Military Personnel Subcommittee is in the process of considering the personnel-related aspects of the President's fiscal year 2001 defense budget request. Military health care is an important quality of life benefit for all military personnel, and the subcommittee will hold three hearings on health care issues in 2000. This hearing will be the first of the series, and will provide the subcommittee with "first-hand" accounts of the TRICARE system from active and retired military personnel and their families. The second hearing will be held at Fort Bragg, North Carolina on Monday, February 28.

In past years, subcommittees of the House Armed Services Committee have held similar "field" hearings on subjects ranging from military readiness to domestic counter-terrorism preparedness. In many cases, testimony provided at these hearings directly influenced provisions contained in the annual National Defense Authorization Act.

The jurisdiction of the House Armed Services Committee includes the operations of the Department of Defense (DOD) as well as the national security operations of the Department of Energy's (DOE) budget. DOD's annual budget of nearly \$280 billion (in fiscal year 2000) affects millions of military and civilian personnel, thousands of facilities, and hundreds of agencies, departments, and commands located throughout the world. The oversight responsibilities of the House Armed Services Committee are conducted primarily within the context of the committee's consideration of the annual defense authorization bill.

The committee divides its responsibilities between five standing subcommittees (Military Procurement, Military Research and Development, Military Readiness, Military Installations and Facilities, and Military Personnel) and three special oversight panels (Morale, Welfare, and Recreation; Merchant Marine; and DOE Reorganization).

The Military Personnel Subcommittee is chaired by U.S. Representative Steve Buyer (R-IN) and is comprised of 18 members of Congress. The subcommittee is responsible for the annual authorization of funding for military forces and endstrengths, integration of active and reserve components, military personnel policy, compensation and other benefits, and related legislative oversight.